

HAER
ILL
99-ROCK,
1-

HAER No. IL-78

ILLINOIS TRACTION SYSTEM,
ROCKDALE PASSENGER STATION
(Chicago, Ottawa, and Peoria Interurban Railroad,
Rockdale Passenger Station)
I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor
Midland and Mound streets
Rockdale
Will County
Illinois

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
ILLINOIS TRACTION SYSTEM, ROCKDALE PASSENGER STATION
(Chicago, Ottawa & Peoria Interurban Railroad,
Rockdale Passenger Station)
I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor

HAER
ILL
99-ROCK,
1-

HAER No. IL-78

Location: I & M Canal National Heritage Corridor
Midland and Mound Streets,
Rockdale, Will County, Illinois

UTM: 16 E.407020 N.4594240
Quad: Joliet

Date of Construction: 1911

Builder: Illinois Traction System

Present Status: Abandoned

Significance: The Rockdale Passenger Station is an example of the standard design used by the interurban Illinois Traction System. The Rockdale Station was also used as an electrical substation to convert electric power for use by the Illinois Traction System

Project Information: The Illinois and Michigan Canal was designated a National Heritage Corridor in 1984. The following year HABS/HAER embarked on an extensive inventory and documentation project of the 100 mile-long corridor. Field work for this project was concluded in 1988. Final editing of the documentation was completed in 1992.

Historian: Gray Fitzsimons, 1987.

ILLINOIS TRACTION SYSTEM,
ROCKDALE PASSENGER STATION
HAER No. IL-78
(Page 2)

The Illinois Traction System erected this passenger station at Rockdale in 1911 when it extended its line from Morris to Joliet. The station served the small industrial town of Rockdale, and, like other stations on Illinois Traction's line, Rockdale Passenger Station was constructed following a standard design. The station included an electrical substation in the central three-story section. The interurban line crossed the DesPlaines River into Joliet just north of Rockdale. From Joliet the interurban ran to Chicago via Lockport, Lemont and Summit. Subsequently called the Chicago, Ottawa & Peoria Railway, the line continued in operation until about 1934 when it was abandoned. Presently two other passenger stations, identical to the one at Rockdale, remain standing.

This brick building with a concrete foundation measures 73' x 23'. The station has brick load-bearing walls --rock-faced brick up to window-sill level, smooth-faced brick above window-sill level. A projecting bay on the north facade contains three windows. The hipped roof is low-pitched and covered with clay tile. There are also decorative ridge tiles. The roof is supported by a steel truss (span about 23') and has overhanging eaves, decorative brackets and cast iron, molded gutters. The central tower also has a hipped roof covered with tile. The east and west walls contain six circular openings originally used for receiving cables of the transmission line. This station was one of many substations in which electric power was converted from 33,000 volts to 600 volts for use on the traction system. Most of the original three-over-three-light, double-hung, sash windows are now covered with boards.

SOURCES:

Brill magazine, July 1915 (reprinted by the Electric Railway Historical Society, ca. 1950).

"Building, Bridge and Track Standards of the Illinois Traction System," Engineering News, v. 65 (June 1, 1911): 648-52.

Chicago and Illinois Valley Railroad, Timetable, December, 1933.

George W. Hilton and John F. Due, The Electric Interurban Railway in America (Stanford, Ca.: The Stanford University Press, 1960).

"Joliet Extension of the Chicago, Ottawa & Peoria Railway," Electric Railway Journal, v. 38 (December, 1911).

William Middleton, The Interurban Era (Milwaukee: The Kalmbach Publishing Company, 1961).

"Maintenance and Improvements on the Illinois Traction System," Electric Railway Journal, v. 33 (April 17, 1909): 716-23.

"McKinley syndicate Properties of Northern Illinois," Street Railway Review, v. 15 (March 15, 1905): 131-5.

Sanborn Map Company, Joilet, Illinois (New York: The Sanborn Map Co., 1924).

State Public Utilities Commission of Illinois, Railroad Map of Illinois, 1916.